The Migrant Union

Digital Livelihoods
for People on the Move

Migrant Union

Migrant Union is an on-going initiative established to advance approaches to enabling the growing numbers of displaced people to access decent, sustainable livelihoods. Envisaged is that the Union will become an international ecosystem of displaced people accessing decent sustainable livelihoods and enabling capabilities, rights and resources.

Created in mid-2018, the initiative has to date been curated by the Project Catalyst platform of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in close association with the Open Society Foundations, which has provided financial support for the investigatory, start-up phase.

Migrant Union: Digital Livelihoods for People on the Move reports on work commissioned to explore the nexus between the changing nature of work, particularly driven by digitalisation, and livelihood opportunities for displaced people. This paper can be read in conjunction with:

Migrant Union: Navigating the Great Disruption summarises the initiative's work to date: (a) highlighting today's practice; (b) the case for a more innovative, systemic approach to addressing the nexus between displacement and livelihoods, and; (c) an ambitious set of proposals for transforming envisaged building blocks in practice. Opinions, conclusions and recommendations presented in this paper are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the initiative's sponsoring organisations or partners.

For more information, please contact simon.zadek@undp.org.

Project Catalyst

Project Catalyst is an initiative of the UNDP established to catalyse systemic interventions in pursuit of sustainable development. Created in early 2018, it has developed a portfolio of higher-risk, high-leverage, workstreams, of which the Migrant Union is one element. Other workstreams are focused on how to harness digitalization in accelerating financing of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the development implications of reshaping global value chains, and the development opportunities associated with governance innovations at the corporate and financial system levels.

For more information on Project Catalyst, please contact arti.singh@undp.org.

Documents are available for download at:
https://www.catalyst.undp.org/content/catalyst/en/home/what-we-do/migrant-nations-initiative/

Author

Evan Easton-Calabria is a researcher at the Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford, focusing on refugee livelihoods, self-reliance, and local governance. She is Principal Investigator of a research project in Uganda and Ethiopia on local responses to crisis migration in secondary cities, funded through the Cities Alliance/UNOPS. She is also lead editor of the Refugee Studies Centre's research dissemination platform Rethinking Refuge. She holds a Masters and Doctorate in International Development from the University of Oxford.

Acknowledgments

Table of Contents

1. Executive Summary

Today displacement is at a record high, with over 70 million people displaced. Estimates of climate change-induced displacement are as high as 1 billion people by 2050. Once displaced, people generally remain in exile for decades. The magnitude of the scale and duration of displacement prompts renewed urgency about livelihoods prospects of displaced people. Scholarship, policy, and practice on livelihoods exists, yet rarely focuses on the nexus of displacement with another emerging global phenomenon: the changing nature of work.

Gig economies and innovations in technology, AI, and robotics are some drivers of the changing nature of work. The conversion of work into digital form – known as digitalization – has myriad effects on societies. Yet literature on the future of work rarely addresses displaced people and there are high barriers for displaced people to enter the digital economy. Research is needed to understand emergent practice to foster digital livelihoods for displaced people, its challenges and successes, as well as impact points to scale to address the existing gap in the livelihoods agenda for displaced people.

This research has identified hundreds of existing online education and training initiatives as well as broad pathways to digital work, such as through digital platforms. It has found that digital work opens new opportunities, markets, and networks for displaced people. The remote and mobile nature of digital work makes it avail-

able to people while they move or are displaced. It can circumvent local work restrictions and enable people to bypass informal work barriers like xenophobia, allowing people jobs they would otherwise be unable to access. Displaced people may even start or continue remote work based in their home country, thus using their existing social networks and increasing their capabilities. There is a wide range of digital work (from simple image categorisation for AI learning to high-skill online consulting), and thus opportunities for people with varying skill levels and resources.

But current approaches are not operating at scale. In part this is due to supply and demand barriers. Different (or lacking) ID systems and types of skill certification cause problems for employers and potential employees alike. Few initiatives effectively connect the private sector and displaced people en masse due to the time and resources needed to gain employer trust, the 'bottom line' of profit and the corresponding skills threshold. Many of these challenges reflect wider systemic barriers including legal and work restrictions and persistent negative narratives of displaced people.

Existing practice actively addresses some of these barriers, such as NGOs and start-ups acting as market intermediaries – including as high-level job-recruitment agencies – for vetting and job-matching. Many NGOs offering digital livelihoods and e-learning also include an emphasis on soft skills to better match supply and demand. There is rising focus on digital identity, cre-

dentialing, and verification services for displaced people. E-commerce platforms offer new ways to connect to markets.

This research has important implications for unlocking new digital possibilities for displaced people at scale. Three key areas of action emerge, namely *aggregation* to address the fragmented practice of existing initiatives, *standardization* to enable interoperable digital ID and credentialing services, and *advocacy* including from private sector actors and displaced people themselves to lobby for work rights, employ-

ment, and narrative shifts. Generating evidence is recommended through piloting regulatory sandboxes and creating other proofs of concept to standardize practice and act as advocacy tools. The ongoing work of international actors promoting work rights, humanitarian protection, and digital solutions is key. Alongside this, there is an important role for other actors to further facilitate supply and demand and develop and regularize markets. These efforts should be enhanced and leveraged to actualise widespread digital livelihoods opportunities for displaced people today and in the future.
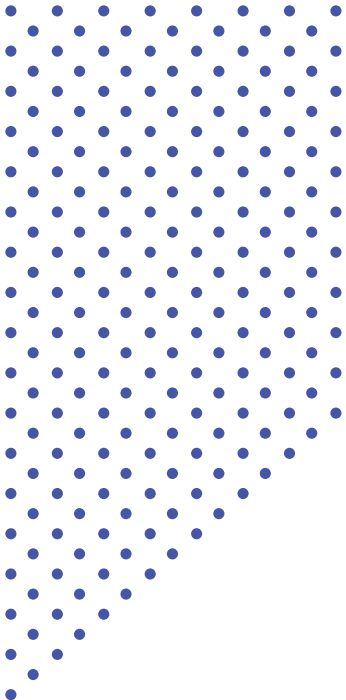
2. Introduction

2.1 Digital Livelihoods for Displaced People: Worthwhile Opportunity or Too Many Risks?

Today displacement is at a record high, with over 70 million people displaced or on the move,[1] and this number is only expected to grow: estimates of climate change-induced migration are as high as 1 billion people displaced by 2050.[2] Current statistics demonstrate that, once displaced, people generally remain in exile for decades. The scale and duration of displacement prompts renewed urgency regarding livelihoods prospects of displaced people. However, while a large body of literature on forced migrants' livelihoods exists, this work rarely looks forwards, including for instance the global phenomenon of the changing nature of work.[3]

As the many reports on the Future of Work[4] indicate, the rise of gig economies and innovations in technology, AI, and robotics are some drivers of the current and projected drastic change in work around the world. Zero hour contracts and jobs without rights and benefits attached to them are on the rise, while at the same time automation could displace up to 30% of existing workers by 2030, affecting 800 million people.[5] The increasing conversion of work into digital form – a process known as *digitalization* – has myriad effects on society and presents both opportunities and challenges for us all.

Yet literature on the future of work rarely addresses the needs of and possibilities for migrants and displaced people.[6] Governments and international labour bodies generally focus on placing displaced people in traditional sectors of work, thereby bypassing chances for this population to become part of the so-called 'next economy'. While the Sustainable Development Goals and the Global Compacts on Refugees and Migration offer important frameworks for action, digital work for displaced people has largely remained disconnected from these frameworks' objectives, such as through examining how this type of work might combat poverty, offer decent work and economic growth, and work to 'leave no one behind'.[7] The technology and enterprise community have also not entered this space at scale, leaving huge possibility to respond to this massive, still emerging global phenomenon. The result is a gap in the livelihoods agenda for displaced people, and a high risk that, if left unaddressed, forced migrants will be further left behind as huge shifts in work and the global economy continue.

Some posit that refugees and migrants are ideally suited for this transition, given the social and economic adaptation that migration necessitates. Migrants, including refugees, set up a disproportionate number of businesses in Europe; in Germany it is currently estimated that 1 in 5 new businesses established are created by migrants.[8] An Iranian refugee who began his finance career through selling penny stocks in a refugee camp[9] in the Netherlands attributed his perseverance to his refugee background. Reflecting on his initial financial losses, he said, "If we got out of that struggle [of being in the camps], why shouldn't we get out of this one?"[10]

Select initiatives identified

Coding Bootcamps
- ReBootKamp
- GoCode [refugee-led]
- Refugees [code]

Data Outsourcing Work
- Samasource
- LevelApp (RefUnite)
- EMPACT (WFP)

Online education
- Sky School
- Kiron
- Kepler International

Language/Translation
- Natakallam
- Chatterbox
- Uable (UNHCR)

Technology Access Centres
- Windle Trust Uganda
- Xavier Project
- CTA (UNHCR)

Digital Vocational Training
- ReDI School of Digital Integration
- SPARK (Norwegian Refugee Council – NRC)
- RESI (ITC/NRC)

Job-Matching
- Talent Beyond Boundaries
- Workeer
- Wework
- More Than One Perspective

E-Commerce
- EkShop Shoron
- Made51
- Wobe
- Tabao

Individual 'success stories'
- Journalist (online column)
- Radio host (online)
- Website designer

Despite these assertions, little research has been undertaken to explore displaced people's livelihoods in relation to the future of work, particularly digitalization. This research, commissioned as part of the *Migrant Union* initiative,[11] examines the nexus of forced displacement, the changing nature of work, and livelihoods. It examined whether specific characteristics of displacement present exciting possibilities to enhance and open up livelihood opportunities for displaced people – or whether the potential barriers, risks, and pitfalls are greater than the benefits.

The primary research question was:

Does, and if so how does, the Future of Work and Digitalization present unique opportunities and challenges for people who are displaced and/or on the move?

The findings clearly indicate that, **yes, there are unique benefits of digital work for displaced people and those on the move.** These include **opening up new opportunities, markets, and networks to people who would otherwise be marginalized from mainstream economic avenues by virtue of their displacement.** Crucially, as the case studies presented here indicate, people have particularly benefitted from digital and remote work precisely because they are on the move or displaced.

Nonetheless, this research also highlights **key barriers, gaps in current practices, and potential risks** that need to be addressed for any existing and future practice to scale and successfully leverage the opportunities presented by technological innovation and digitalization. These barriers and risks demonstrate **that the dual categories of (1) capabilities and (2) access to resources matter** regarding displaced peoples' ability to benefit from digital work, **particularly due to the barriers to livelihoods, identification, and financial inclusion that displacement presents. Fragmented and unstandardized practices of helping displaced people access digital work also present systemic barriers to scale.**

The following report presents findings from research conducted through 25 key informant interviews and the identification and examination of over 150 experiences[12] of digital and digitally mediated livelihoods. This research employed a scoping study methodology to map initiatives and informal pathways helping displaced people secure digital and digitally mediated work, such as e-commerce trade, as well as overcome barriers to digital work (e.g. through obtaining a digital ID). The report presents the achievements within emergent practice, the limits of these achievements, and barriers that need to be overcome to scale up what works.

2.2 Overview of Research
Research Objectives
The objective of this research was to **map the landscape of existing practice at the intersection of the future of work (with an emphasis on digitalization though not to the exclusion of other kinds of work) and livelihood opportunities for displaced people.** This included identifying and analysing the benefits and challenges that digitalization and the broader changing nature of work offer to displaced people today and in the future. The aim is to identify elements of existing practice that can successfully be scaled.

Scope of Research
Alongside other existing research, this study surfaced hundreds of online education and training initiatives as well as broad pathways to digital work, such as through digital platforms.[13] While these are an important part of the landscape, it was often difficult to determine how impactful or widely used they were by forced migrants. Thus, the research confined itself to a) verified illustrative examples demonstrating the range of basic digital and ICT training in existence, b) initiatives offering more comprehensive pathways to work, such as training that led into an online internship programme or connected to a digital work platform, and c) alternative pathways to accessing digital work or work by digital means by displaced people (e.g. the use of ride-hailing platforms by forced migrants). The study was undertaken between May 7 and July 31, 2019 and was comprised of primary research through key informant interviews, desk-based research, and informal focus group discussions, as well as secondary research. Participant observation was also conducted at a 1.5-day workshop led by the *Migrant Union* in Geneva. The side box provides an overview of the methodology employed.

Roadmap of Report

The following sections present (I) the landscape of digital and digitally mediated livelihoods for displaced people, divided into: (1) geography, (2) types of digital work and their link to the broader changing world of work, and (3) the main actors currently involved. This is followed by (II) an examination of opportunities afforded by digital work and critical issues creating barriers to employment and scale, and (III) how emerging digital practice can provide pathways forward. Included throughout the report are brief case studies illustrating a range of practice, each of which highlights opportunities and barriers for scale indicative of wider initiatives and pathways. The report concludes with a discussion of main take-aways and next steps for scaling.

Research Methodology

A scoping study methodology following Arksey and O'Malley (2005) was employed to map available digital livelihoods initiatives and experiences for displaced people. A scoping study can be undertaken to examine the extent, range and nature of a research topic, and to identify gaps in extant literature.

As Mays et al. (2001) write, scoping studies 'aim to map rapidly the key concepts underpinning a research area and the main sources and types of evidence available, and can be undertaken as stand- alone projects in their own right, especially where an area is complex or has not been reviewed comprehensively before'.

Research steps included:
- Identify organisations, initiatives, and experts to contact/research
- Conduct desk-based research and interview contacts identified in preliminary research
- Select initiatives for inclusion
- Chart data
- Collate, summarise, and report results (begin draft report)
- Parallel 'consultation exercise' to inform and validate findings

Note: See reference list for citations in boxes

3. Landscape of Digital and Digitally Mediated Livelihoods

3.1 Geography

The research identified several main locations where initiatives and pathways to digital or digitally mediated work were undertaken.[14] Corresponding to other literature on digital projects for refugees,[15] in the Global North Germany was the most common site for initiatives, followed by the Netherlands and the UK. In the Global South, the most common site for initiatives was in East Africa, primarily Kenya and Uganda. In Asia, multiple initiatives exist in India, while Turkey, Israel/Palestine, and Jordan were common sites in the Middle East and North Africa. Most of these initiatives have arisen since 2010 and specifically since 2015 when the so-called 'European refugee crisis' centred the issues in the public debate.

The sidebar provides a non-exhaustive overview of countries with the most digital initiatives and pathways to work identified. While the majority of identified initiatives in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East were based in camps, likely due to the plethora of actors engaged in programming, initiatives in urban areas were more common in Europe, Latin & South America, and Southeast Asia. The individual displaced people interviewed who had created or found digital livelihoods were all based in urban areas. While this is likely not representative of the location of individual engagement in digital work, the lack of humanitarian assistance offered in urban areas compared to camps does indeed drive displaced people to become entrepreneurs, a phenomenon that may translate into digital entrepreneurship, as well.

Main Identified Locations for Digital/ Digitally-enabled Work for Displaced People

Europe: Germany (Berlin), Netherlands, UK
Sub-Saharan Africa: Kenya (Nairobi, Dadaab, Kakuma), Uganda
Latin & South America: Brazil, Colombia (IDPs), Argentina, Ecuador
MENA: Jordan, Israel/Palestine, Turkey, Lebanon
Asia: India, Bangladesh, China (IDPs, economic migrants)

3.2 Types of Digital Work & Link to the Broader Future of Work

All kinds of digital work exist, ranging from simple image categorisation for AI learning to high-skill online consulting. This means that **there are opportunities for people with a range of skill levels and resources.** The most common types of work and ways to access digital skills and livelihoods are overviewed in the side bar and discussed below.

Notably, many of these findings **echo trends in the broader Future of Work.** One of the main mediums

Digital work & training opportunities include:

- Job-matching platforms
- Digital consulting via online work platforms
- Language & translation businesses
- Graphic design, Web design & coding schools
- E-Commerce
- Digital entrepreneurship
- Basic ICT training

identified to access digital work for displaced people is through online work platforms, where displaced people can join as freelance consultants and offer skills such as translation and interpreting, data entry, and administrative support to companies.[16] While some of these jobs necessitate unique skill sets, others entail repetitive tasks such as basic data entry and thus have a lower barrier to entry. Upwork and Figure 8 are two online work platforms identified in the research that have partnered with organisations supporting displaced people to more easily enable access to digital work (see Case Study 3 for details).

A rising phenomenon, online labour platforms are growing 30% a year – highly significant compared to traditional labour markets.[17] They enable corporations to source freelance work from around the world, thus comprising a significant part of the so-called 'online gig economy'. This economy is highly transnational, with services on one large platform conducting 89% of transactions across national borders.[18] Increasingly, large firms including Fortune 500 companies are utilizing these platforms, demonstrating a shift in the world of work also by global business influencers. As Corporaal and Lehdonvirta write, 'It's one thing when independent consultants and start-ups experiment with new ways of organizing work; it's something else when corporations employing hundreds of thousands of people adopt such models.'[19]

Initiatives such as the World Food Programme's Empact programme and the International Trade Centre/Norwegian Refugee Council's Refugee Employment Skills Initiative (RESI) programme link trained participants to these online work platforms as well as have direct relationships with the platforms themselves in order to ensure displaced people are able to register.[20] For example, RESI has partnered with Upwork to 'support the verification of identification of refugee freelancers through locally emitted documents.'[21] These initiatives demonstrate forward-thinking employment models, and NGOs' already existing roles in mediating displaced people's access to online work.

The multitude of digital skills trainings, including graphic and web design, coding, and basic ICT training also reflect the changing nature of work's 'reskilling imperative' of workforces.[22] As per a 2017 Accenture report, the need for upskilling goes, however, beyond just technical training:

There needs to be a greater emphasis on broadening the variety of skills within each worker… Workers will need technical and digital skills, complemented by unique human skills, such as empathy, communication and problem solving, to thrive in the digital economy. Yet 60% of employers think that less than 25% of their workforce is ready to work with new technologies and machines.[23]

Several of the initiatives identified in the course of research and highlighted in this report, such as Sky School and the Gaza Sky Geeks, focus explicitly on improving the 'soft skills' needed alongside technical skillsets (see Case Study 5). However, many others focus only on digital skills training or access to digital work without explicit links to work or markets. This lack of network linkages represents a key barrier, a focus of section 2 of this report.

3.3 Actors

A wide variety of actors are involved in fostering digital livelihoods for displaced people. This research found that particular actors are often active at certain 'levels' of the international system, as summarised in Figure 1 below.
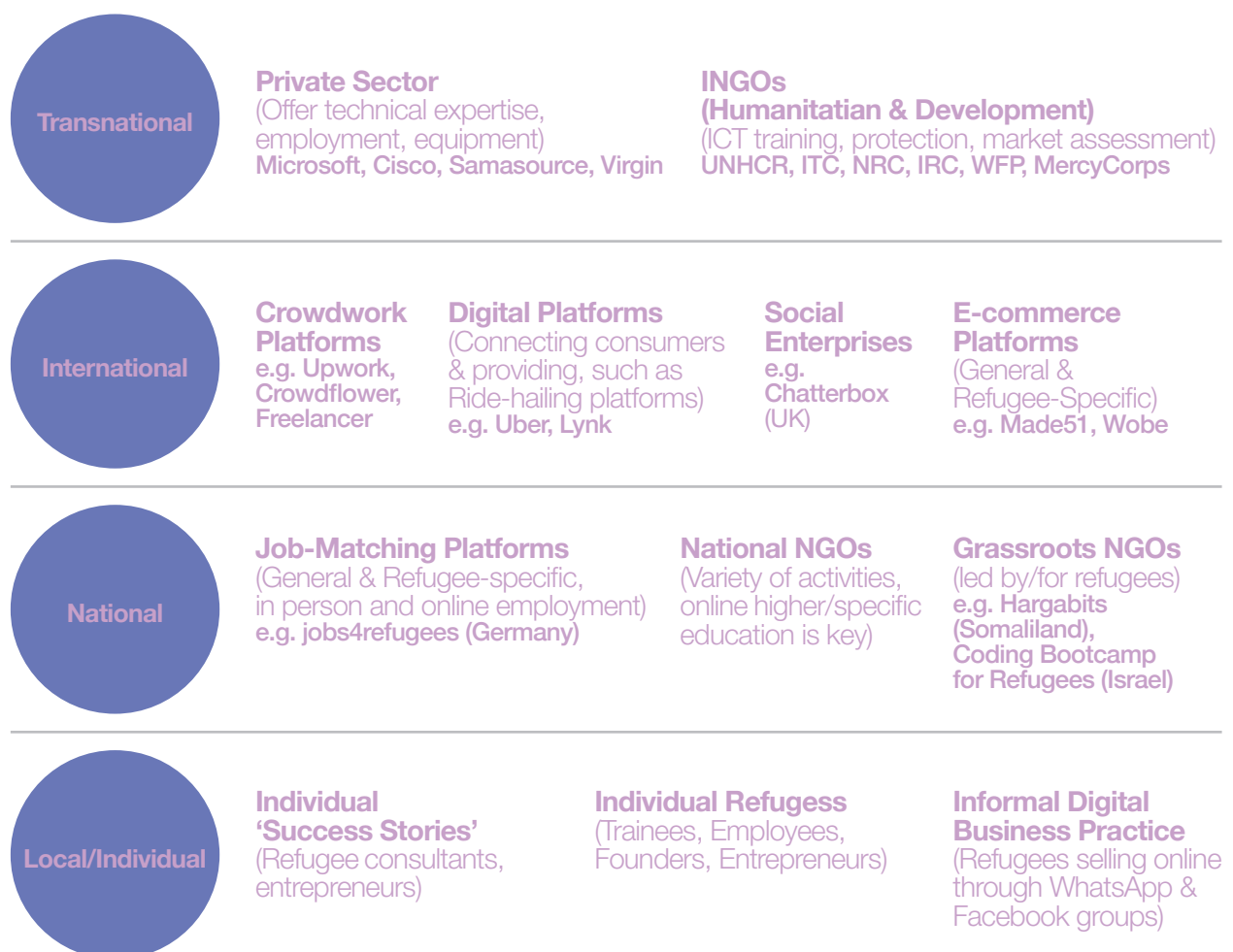
Transnational actors such as private sector companies and international organisations often provide the infrastructure to enable digital work, be it access to internet and computers, digital trainings, or undertaking market assessments to match supply and demand. International organisations in particular have an important role to play in offering humanitarian protection and upholding labour standards. The International Labour Organization's Decent Work Agenda, for example, cuts across country priorities, is relevant for displaced people, and also transcends into digital work.[24]

Transnational actors can mobilise resources, forge strategic partnerships, and make use of extensive social networks and social capital, and thus play a key role in large-scale programming. Global System for Mobile Communications Association (GSMA), for example, a corporation representing the interests of more than 400 companies in the mobile ecosystem, has created a Humanitarian Innovation Fund to test and scale the use of mobile technology to address humanitarian challenges, including displacement.[25] For these telecom operators, refugee camps are not just sites of humanitarian intervention but also marketplaces where they can make significant profits. This growing interest is based on research showing that refugees are spending about a third of their dispos-

able income on connectivity – thereby demonstrating its importance in their lives.[26] At the same time, both the private sector and international organisations engaged in humanitarian digital work training and infrastructure are often constrained by bureaucracy, and international organisations face the additional burden of short funding cycles, which often require demonstrating impact more quickly than they are able to.[27] This limits their ability to scale their programmes.

At the international level, digital labour platforms such as Crowdwork and e-commerce platforms offer jobs that some displaced people can directly access. Job-matching platforms, while sometimes international such as **Talent Beyond Boundaries,** are often national, targeting a domestic market such as **jobs4refugees** in Germany or **Refugee Talent** in Australia. The majority of these job-matching platforms use digital databases to link potential employee and employer rather than offer digital jobs per se. National NGOs are among the most common actors to offer digital and ICT skills training to displaced people, and often target refugees. Grassroots NGOs also play a role in this, such as Hargabits in Somaliland, which trains IDPs in digital design and other skills demanded by the local market.[28]

Locally, displaced people access work through digital platforms linking consumers and providers, such as ride-hailing platforms like Uber in East Africa.[29] Displaced people also often engage in informal trade through WhatsApp and Facebook groups (see Case Study 7). Grassroots and community-based organisations may provide computer and internet access as well as many displaced people's only access to ICT trainings.[30] While individual displaced people can and do obtain digital work internationally, this research found that many of the digital or digitally-accessed job opportunities are actually *local*.[31] This suggests the potential for digitalisation to foster job creation in displaced people's own environment (potentially by avoiding local labour barriers) as well as beyond borders. Figure 1. below illustrates the different levels of the international system where these different actors generally operate.

Transnational

Private Sector
(Offer technical expertise, employment, equipment)
Microsoft, Cisco, Samasource, Virgin

INGOs
(Humanitatian & Development)
(ICT training, protection, market assessment)
UNHCR, ITC, NRC, IRC, WFP, MercyCorps

International

Crowdwork Platforms
e.g. Upwork, Crowdflower, Freelancer

Digital Platforms
(Connecting consumers & providing, such as Ride-hailing platforms)
e.g. Uber, Lynk

Social Enterprises
e.g. Chatterbox (UK)

E-commerce Platforms
(General & Refugee-Specific)
e.g. Made51, Wobe

National

Job-Matching Platforms
(General & Refugee-specific, in person and online employment)
e.g. jobs4refugees (Germany)

National NGOs
(Variety of activities, online higher/specific education is key)

Grassroots NGOs
(led by/for refugees)
e.g. Hargabits (Somaliland), Coding Bootcamp for Refugees (Israel)

Local/Individual

Individual 'Success Stories'
(Refugee consultants, entrepreneurs)

Individual Refugess
(Trainees, Employees, Founders, Entrepreneurs)

Informal Digital Business Practice
(Refugees selling online through WhatsApp & Facebook groups)

4. Opportunities Presented By Digital & Digitally Mediated Work

4.1 Introduction

This section reviews some of the opportunities that digital and digitally mediated work can provide, illustrated by two case studies. This research has found that **digital work opens up new opportunities, markets, and networks for displaced people beyond their immediate physical location. Due to the remote and mobile nature of digital work,** it remains **available to people on the move** or those who settle in multiple host countries. In many instances, **it circumvents local work restrictions,** allowing people access to jobs they would be unable to receive in their host countries, though regulations on transnational work appear to vary by country. It may also **help displaced people bypass informal barriers to work,** such as xenophobia by national employers. Indeed, some researchers posit that **the majority of displaced people pursue digital work only when all of their other options for in-person work in the informal and formal economy are denied.**[32]

Depending on their circumstances, displaced people may even start or continue **remote work that is based in their home country,** thus allowing them to **utilize their existing social networks** and increase their capabilities. Relatedly, people can match their skills and services with a market that may not exist where they physically are, even allowing them to **work with or sell goods to diaspora markets around the world as well as international customers and employers.**

Most digital work occurs on an individual basis with displaced people becoming members of the online gig economy. While there are risks attached to this, benefits include displaced people **managing their own time and tasks** and thus making work fit into their life circumstances, even if they suddenly change. Relatedly, some **work is accessible by Smart phone rather than computers,** with payment almost immediately through mobile money. This means that **with just a phone and a phone number, migrants can both access and be paid for work.** This can be particularly helpful for those lacking official identification, unable to open a bank account in their host country, or even on the move.

At the most basic level, **myriad trainings** (occurring in person as well as online) provide displaced people with the **necessary skillset to undertake digital work**, while at the most advanced, displaced people are **supported to enter highly competitive digital markets via online work platforms or e-commerce** as freelancers and entrepreneurs, or else **employed directly by corporations** and social enterprises.

The following case studies are important illustrative examples of the unique benefits of digitalization for displaced people and people on the move as well as the variety of existing pathways to achieving them. In mapping digital livelihoods initiatives, this research has found countless such examples, indicating that digitalization and the future of work do, indeed, provide unique benefits to refugees, displaced people, and other people of concern.

Illustrative case studies of the benefits of digital and digitally mediated work for displaced people:

CASE STUDY 1: NATAKALLAM (Middle East)
Remote Work across Countries

What is it: NaTakallam is a digital platform that employs displaced people for language services (translations, tutoring and conversation partners, etc.)

The Story: NaTakallam employs men and women who are displaced in the Middle East, in countries including Lebanon and Turkey. Many of these individuals have only just begun their journeys, and will be forced onwards by violence or persecution in transit countries. Several NaTakallam employees have found themselves in Europe without the necessary credentials or language skills to find employment in their new country. Despite changing countries, they are able to continue to work and earn their living thanks to being digitally employed by NaTakallam.

What this Illustrates:
- Digital employment provides unique benefits to people who might be on the move, displaced, or face a lack of control over where they may be forced to move next.
- Platforms can be created to harness the existing skills of displaced people to offer them digital work.

CASE STUDY 2: THE WORKING REFUGEE (Denmark/Estonia)
Digital visa/residency Pathway
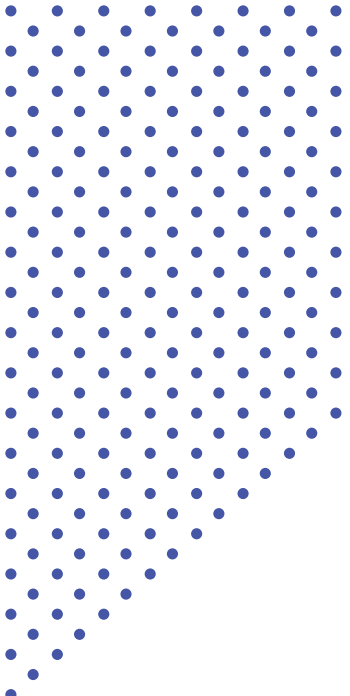
What is it: The Working Refugee is an NGO providing support to certain refugees with relevant documents to obtain Estonian e-residency. This in turn allows them to open a business bank account, rent a virtual office, and open up (virtual) EU businesses.

The Story: Refugees (with documents) living in EU countries often face extremely long waits for business permits that enable them to actualize their entrepreneurial potential. An Estonian e-residency leverages an existing digital tool to greatly speed up this process and potentially allow for the proliferation of new, refugee-led businesses within the EU.

What this Illustrates:
- There are unique challenges faced by displaced people that innovations in digitalization can help overcome
- Linking displaced people with markets goes beyond just matching supply and demand – governments have a role to play in creating favourable conditions & opportunities
- e-citizenship/e-residency models can open up work opportunities for displaced people

5. Critical Issues Creating Barriers to Employment & Scale – & Elements of Success

While it is important to identify successes, existing challenges and barriers offer a better understanding of how to harness the unique potential of digital livelihood opportunities for displaced people **at scale.** The mapping research reveals that digital tools, digitalization, and other 'future of work' models are currently working to overcome **key barriers** that **constrain individuals** in conditions of displacement or mobility, in seeking employment and livelihoods opportunities ('Supply side'). They are also working to overcome barriers that dissuade, inhibit, or simply don't allow **market actors** to employ displaced people ('Demand side'). The barriers highlighted here are also **barriers to scaling opportunities** for displaced people to join the digital workforce.

The main barriers identified on the supply side are a lack of **capability, access, and networks** that prevent displaced people from identifying, entering, and being competitive for digital and digitally mediated work. On the demand side, there is a lack of **knowledge and trust, access, and interest in displaced people as employees or service and goods providers.**

Just as new work opportunities will be opened, **the changing nature of work replicates some of the skillset and socioeconomic divides seen in the non-digital world.** For displaced people with low socioeconomic backgrounds, for example, specific disadvantages from displacement – such as a lack of national identification documents, language skills, or long-developed social networks in a host country – are **compounded by other barriers that the changing world of work creates for the poorest.** This includes a loss of menial jobs to automation, lack of access to Smart devices to find or create digital work, and limited social networks with which to digitally trade. The challenges specific to displaced people in accessing digital work and other more general barriers must be addressed by a variety of actors to enable displaced people to foster digital livelihoods at scale.

Many of these barriers are broad and systemic, including work regulations in host countries, different (or lacking) ID systems and a widespread refusal from host states to accept alternate or foreign IDs, as well as negative existing narratives of displaced people. The case of NaTakallam for example, illustrates a key specific supply-side barrier: limitations refugees face in accessing Lebanon's local labour market, which affects refugees' ability to work regardless of their capabilities.

Initiatives led by local, national, and international NGOs provide various types of digital literacy trainings and in some cases expand displaced people's capacities and offer direct pathways to digital work. **However, few of the hundreds of existing global initiatives are effectively connecting displaced to the private sector or digital markets in critical numbers.** Therefore, while individual success stories of initiatives such as the Refugee Skills Employment Initiative (RESI)

(overviewed in the side box) exist, as well as successful digital livelihoods found or created by individual displaced people, these are not widespread.

This section reviews the main supply and demand barriers identified in the course of research and offers some examples of how they are being addressed. Key takeaways for impact and scaling are then presented.

5.1 Supply Side Barriers

Supply-Side Barrier to Scale #1: Lack of Capability

This research has identified that displaced people often lack the necessary capabilities – defined broadly as raw skills, abilities and characteristics – in order to work, make choices about employment or entrepreneurship, or be competitive in the eyes of employers. While these include so-called 'hard skills' and 'abilities' (generally technical), other less tangible skills are also critical for successful digital and other employment. So-called soft skills are interpersonal 'people' skills as well as character traits and include communication skills such as listening. As the Gaza Sky Geeks example illustrates (Case Study 5), these 'soft' elements of capability are often harder to teach but crucial to have. These findings echo broader research on the skills needed for future sectors of work, which discuss that the ability to communicate well within teams as well as having resilience and flexibility in the workforce will be increasingly important.[33]

Solutions to Supply-Side Barrier #1

First and foremost, this research found that there are opportunities for displaced people to improve their capabilities to competitively enter the digital and digitally mediated workforce, mainly offered through training and unique forms of education. RESI, for example, does not offer only a simple technical skills training but instead walks participants through a series of hard and soft skills development courses aimed to help them become competitive freelancers. This includes mentoring, networking connections, and coaching in CV writing, interview skills, and more. Jean-Marie Ndikumana, a RESI participant and winner of the online freelancing Kakuma competition, shared, for example, I have come across different opportunities, but the Kakuma (online freelancing) boot camp is the best and I believe it will change our lives and mindsets. Since we are talented in different areas and have many skills, but we didn't know how to sell them online. The boot camp we have undergone was a great opportunity for us to learn new things and work beyond the refugee status. First and foremost, being taught on how to work online made me feel rejuvenated despite my refugee status.[34]

Other forms of capability development take place in educational settings. The Sky School, in collaboration with United World College South East Asia, offers a secondary education to refugee youth that is focused on building competencies rather than concrete technical or academic skills. Sky School is completed via a blended learning model (60% in person, 40% online) and aims to build the capabilities needed for any context that refugees might be based or find themselves in. The School is also developing the first international high school diploma programme for refugees around the world; once students gain a Sky School Diploma, they will have opportunities to access higher education and livelihoods.[35]

Two elements of the Sky School model stand out: first, the focus on **building the very core competencies** for which private sector actors and digital training programmes state a need (i.e. the 'soft skills').[36] One of their main emphases, for example, is on supporting students to exercise agency in order to affect social change wherever they are based. This emphasis on soft skills is particularly important as research has found that university systems across the MENA and other regions do not produce graduates who are able to join and succeed in the global digital economy (see side bar below).

Second, Sky School is based on a **'chameleon-like' educational model** that can be adapted according to the context and needs of individual students. Notably, multiple trainers emphasised the need for physical, 'real-life' engagement with trainees in addition to digital teaching in order to transmit these skills, which Sky School achieves through its 'blended learning' model.

CASE STUDY 3: REFUGEE EMPLOYMENT & SKILLS INITIATIVE (Kakuma & Dadaab Refugee Camps, Kenya; Jordan; Gaza; Somaliland)

Multi-Sectoral Partnerships Pathway

What is it: RESI provides intensive ICT and online consulting skills training to help refugees work as competitive online freelancers through the online work platform Upwork.

The Story: Refugee camps often lack large-scale markets and livelihoods trainings rarely meet existing demand. RESI trains refugees as digital consultants and opens up digital pathways to online international markets through a freelancing work platform. From the RESI training, the 'Dadaab Freelancing Collective' was created, an online refugee consulting business advertised on Upwork.

Value of Partnerships:
RESI was formed as a partnership between the International Trade Centre (ITC) & the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), plus the technology company Samasource & online work platform Upwork. ITC provides the development, market, and trade experience while NRC offers protection and addresses local barriers through dialogue and advocacy. Technical experience and a direct pathway to the private sector are offered by, respectively, Samasource & Upwork.

The development, humanitarian, technical, and private sector expertise of this partnership means refugees enter an 'A-Z programme' beginning with skills training and ending with access to a competitive online market, with different actors supporting different parts of the pathway.

Overcomes Supply Barriers:
• Capability: Offers online consulting skills training
• Access: Forged partnership with online work platform, negotiated with platform to accept refugee ID
• Networks: Provides link to market actors through online work platform; link to other skilled refugees to create joint businesses

Overcomes Demand Barriers:
• Knowledge & Trust: Programme acted as initial intermediary to online work platform
• Market assessments (international to local) to identify demand

Takeaway for scaling:
• Development vs humanitarian approach (competitive training programme targeting market demand)
• Cross-sector partnerships including business, humanitarian, and development actors
• Success of direct access between displaced people and private sector via online work platforms

Source: Key Informant Interview, RESI Director; NRC Country Director Kenya

Elements of Success to Achieve Supply-Side Scale #1

- Network across sectors to help displaced people gain skills that match market demand (e.g. partnerships, alliances, and coalitions including private sector, government, development, and humanitarian actors)

- Capitalise on E-learning platforms and blended learning models (utilise for a variety of skills and non-traditional learning such as important 'soft skills' for the future of work)

- 'Chameleon-like' models that can be adapted according to context

Supply-Side Barrier to Scale # 2: Lack of Access

Many individuals in displaced circumstances have the requisite skills to work but lack the material or regulatory foundation to actualise their skillsets. The resulting lack of access stems from **a variety of barriers, including proper or recognised identification, host country regulations, and social networks**

to find or be selected for work. This means that while digital or digitally mediated work opportunities exist, they are not always accessible to displaced people. While poor or disenfranchised nationals may face similar barriers, such as lacking social networks, **displaced people face a disproportionate burden to job access when they lack a proper ID or recognised credentials, as well as the ability to have these be verified and verifiable.**

Existing systems to address these issues are fragmented. Digital identity and credentialing solutions are often project- or country-based, meaning there is a lack of global standardisation and systematisation to recognising the identity and credentials of displaced people. This impacts displaced people who may move countries, and also means that the demand-side market cannot identify and access potential talent in a large-scale, global way.

For example, in addition to its non-digital registration services, UNHCR has created UNHCR Verify-MY, a free mobile document verification app in Malaysia to enable UNHCR- issued refugee documents/cards to be verified by authorities and organisations. While this may help streamline verification nationally, it has not yet expanded beyond Malaysia. Importantly, it is also a service verifying *paper* documents rather than creating digital ID documents for refugees that might be more widely recognised.

Host country regulations also strongly mitigate displaced people's access to digital and non-digital work. Zetter and Ruaudel[37] found that approximately 50% of states party to the Geneva Convention restrict in part or in full refugees' right to work, as do many states that are not party to the Convention at all. The 10 million stateless people in the world face similar restrictions on work, often related to a lack of recognised ID or not being afforded the same rights with the IDs they do hold, as do millions more economic and other migrants around the world. While digital or remote work may offer a solution for some to bypass host country restrictions, this research found that dis-

CASE STUDY 4:
LIMITS TO SCALE – LACK OF RECOGNISED ID

The Success:
Alaa is a Syrian social entrepreneur & NGO worker in Cairo, Egypt. In 2016 with two other Syrians he started the website Tomooh (www.tomooh.org) offering information in Arabic for Syrian refugees on navigating Egyptian and other bureaucracy, including how to get marriage & birth certificates, and register with UNHCR. The website expanded to offer support to Syrians in Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon, as well, & also began providing information about university scholarships that Syrians could access. It now has 70,000 followers on social media. While Alaa and the other founders started the website as volunteers, they are now making money through ads. 'It's good,' Alaa explained, 'because the refugees don't pay for the help – Google does. It's enough for three families to live in Egypt.'

The Barriers:
However, because of Egypt's strict laws, Alaa can't open a bank account with his refugee ID; although it is valid, it is not recognised. While the income he makes from Google is sent via Western Union, he is prevented from expanding the business due to a lack of bank account. He has even had to turn down offers from organisations to provide funding to grow. 'We can't register as an organisation because we are Syrians, which means we don't have an office or a bank account. The organisation couldn't give us money without a bank account, so now we are working with them on a voluntary basis.'

The Takeaway:
While Alaa's success in digital livelihoods may be an outlier, his lack of papers is not. The World Bank estimates that 1 billion people in the world lack an official proof of identity, with displaced people disproportionately at risk of lacking documentation. 161 countries have ID systems using digital technologies, but many of them are national rather than international, leaving displaced people like Alaa with no way to carry their identity with them digitally.

Source: Key informant interview, Alaa Alkraidi, Co-Founder, Tomooh

placed people still have difficulty navigating restrictive laws and regulations. While a refugee in the Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya may, for example, have a thriving e-commerce business, this is dependent on being legally able to travel to access the goods they aim to sell.[38] Similarly, a tech entrepreneur such as Alaa in Egypt will struggle to create a sustainable digital business due to not being able to open a bank account with a refugee ID (see Case Study 4 above).

Solutions to Supply-Side Barrier #2:
Identity, Credentialing, and Verification:
In addition to the crucial work of lobbying host states to recognise refugee IDs, digital initiatives may offer some solutions. Digital ID and credentialing companies seek to create interoperable (coherent & transnational) digital identity, credentialing, and verification services, & in certain cases are already working with displaced people.

GSMA and Trulioo are two companies offering services in identity and document verification, including for displaced people. Learning Machine[39] issues digital credentials across a variety of sectors, from the workforce to healthcare to education, which are verified by QR code in order to be easily read across institutions and borders. These companies are seeking ways to help ID and credentials remain with individuals during movement, ranging from displacement to changing jobs, as well as be easily accepted by potential employers and business partners.

The GSMA Digital Identity Programme works with governments, mobile operators, and development actors to explore ways mobile technology can enable accessible and inclusive digital identities in Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia – where 81% of people lacking formal proof of identity live.[40] Trulioo primarily offers companies identity and document verification, but is exploring avenues for mobile network operators to act as 'centralised, cross-border verifiers of identity by harnessing the user data and transaction histories linked to specific SIM cards'.[41] It also partnered with the Canadian Red Cross in 2017 to help verify the identities of 50,000 fire evacuees and provide them with emergency funds. The Red Cross had previously had to manually verify recipients' identities, which was time-consuming and sometimes ineffective. This partnership demonstrates how identity, credentialing, and verification services have the potential to help not only displaced people but the variety of actors that support them. The focus on mobile phones as a means to create and demonstrate digital identities also represents an important advancement for displaced people in low-resource settings.

Other digital identity services aim to explicitly foster economic identities to displaced people. The blockchain platform BanQu[42] works with Somali refugees in the Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya to create economic identities through including not only basic personal data but economic information like successful business transactions to create a relationship-based

Regulatory Gaps – Recommendations

Advocacy: gaps in regulation, restrictions, loopholes, and regulatory sandboxes (a framework set up, generally by a financial sector regulator, to test small-scale innovations), as well as ensuring workplace rights, could be primary advocacy functions of the Migrant Union or a similar coalition of actors

Digital Visa? Could a visa, given to individuals who work digitally and remotely but pay taxes to host countries, provide a middle-ground to ensure workplace rights without limiting further people's right to work?

credit profile. This information allows other BanQu users to securely provide loans or enter into business arrangements with other users. While this service helps local business transactions become more secure, it also allows refugees to enter global supply chains as verifiable sellers.[43] However, important concerns about blockchain platforms for refugees exist, including the risk of abuse through digital identities such as tracking people, as well as information provided to corporations.[44] This points towards the important role of regulation in these and other areas of technological advancement.

Elements of Success to Achieve Supply-Side Scale #2:
- Focus on interoperability of ID and credentialing systems, including creating international digital ID/credentialing standards & regulations. This is important for both the supply and demand sides, as displaced people could maintain valid ID across borders and employers would have easy verifiability processes. At the same time, data privacy is a key concern that must be addressed.

CASE STUDY 5: GAZA SKY GEEKS (Gaza)
Legal Loopholes Pathway

What is it: Gaza Sky Geeks is an innovation & entrepreneurship hub that partnered with Google and the INGO Mercy Corps to help startup founders grow their businesses beyond Gaza. It also works with Founders & Coders International to offer a comprehensive coding boot camp in Palestine. Graduates gain technical skills to join the high-skilled digital workforce.

The Story: Palestinian refugees face high unemployment rates & few job prospects in Gaza. Starting with offering access to high-speed internet in 2011, Gaza Sky Geeks recognised the potential for Palestinian entrepreneurs to build digital businesses and access digital employment through tech. The program now has over 50 graduates, many of whom own & operate businesses based abroad. Utilizing legal loopholes, much of the business infrastructure is established abroad. Graduates are able to open up an American bank account while in Gaza, for example, thereby overcoming barriers to financial inclusion.

Gaza Sky Geeks is currently working to bridge graduates with the existing market and move to scale. They aim to become a high-level digital consultancy offering both hard & soft skill training to refugees, & sourcing high-skilled refugee talent for commercial businesses, similar to the international digital consulting organisation Infosys, in order to open up access to digital work.

What this Illustrates:
- Unlikely actors such as a tech startup and a humanitarian organisation can successfully offer job training and act as a consultancy to link potential employees with companies seeking talent
- Legal loopholes can offer pathways to accessing necessary services for digital work such as banking
- Soft skills as well as technical skills are necessary for displaced people to be competitive in markets
- Digital work for displaced people can be fostered in even the most constrained of environments

- Use of Blockchain platforms to create digital identities (e.g. BanQu in the Dadaab refugee camp, Kenya, which creates 'economic identities' and connects displaced people to global supply chains)

- National and global advocacy for displaced people's right to work (e.g. Refugee Council and scholarship on protection and labour mobility)

- Multilateral commitments to regulatory sandboxes by governments and the private sector to create pilots/proofs of concept to enable widespread uptake (e.g. learning from existing legal loopholes & initiating similar pilots)

Supply-Side Barrier to Scale #3: Lack of Networks
A rupture in social networks is a common theme in displacement,[45] with myriad resulting challenges. Even people with high capabilities and high levels of access to resources may lack the networks to obtain digital and other work if they are in a new place. This research has found that linkages to markets and jobs occur formally through market intermediaries as well as informally through digital networks. However,

these networks are often dependent on participation in a formal NGO-led skills training or employment programme, or in informal cases dependent on access to internet and knowledge of relevant social media platforms and groups to join. While this research found elements of success in helping displaced people access digital work through market intermediaries and informal social networks, current practice is chaotic and fragmented.

Of the many existing ways to build or connect to networks that enable digital and digitally enabled work, market intermediaries were identified as key. The exact role of these intermediaries varies, from sharing information about job opportunities with displaced people to liaising with online work platforms to negotiate the acceptance of refugee IDs (as was the case with the RESI programme) to directly pursuing private sector contracts that displaced people could then undertake work for (see Case Study 5 below).The role of market intermediaries is expanded on below, along with an often overlooked type of intermediary – informal digital networks on social media platforms.

Solutions to Supply-Side Barrier #3
Market intermediaries
In keeping with broader trends on the 'Future of Work', there is a booming group of small and medium-sized digital market intermediaries that help link skilled and capable workers to market opportunities. As overviewed in the 'Actors' section, these include start-ups such as online work platforms, national and international NGOs, and development agencies. In hubs in East Africa such as Nairobi, for example, digital platforms offer a marketplace connecting buyers and sellers, which refugees are also involved in. Main areas of refugee involvement are transport, retail, e-commerce, digital sourcing, and on-demand labour such as casual work and housekeeping.[46]

More formally, NGOs such as <u>LevelApp</u> overviewed in the side box and the <u>World Food Programme's EM-PACT programme</u> forge direct relationships with pri-

vate sector actors in order to secure contracts. Both organisations target tech companies seeking low-skill digital help to train AI through image and other categorisation. These jobs consist of hundreds and even thousands of tasks unfeasible for one person to complete, and so instead offer hundreds of displaced people 'online gig work' that can generally be completed by phone. The EMPACT programme also works with and through the online work platform Figure 8 to identify available work and bid for contracts. This demonstrates the multiple intermediaries that can exist within one pathway to securing displaced people with digital work. However, more research needs to be conducted to understand the long-term impact of this work on refugees' lives and on their digital employability.

'Informal' digital networks
Informal digital trade is under-researched globally, yet work on how to measure this type of trade is being promoted by actors such as the OECD and the World Trade Organisation, due to the growing recognition of its widespread use.[47] Burgeoning research demonstrates that displaced people use their existing skills to offer goods and services informally through posting on social media groups, as well, often reaching thousands of members (potential customers).[48] **WhatsApp and Facebook groups** (churches, diaspora groups, shared interest groups), as well as **Instagram followers,** offer a customer base for displaced people to offer goods and services locally and internationally. **Facebook pages and Facebook marketplace are other common ways to sell online.** These offer pre-made networks that are ideal for selling, particularly in situations where people have few local contacts. In Nairobi, for example, South Sudanese refugees sell peanut butter to WhatsApp group members while Congolese and Burundian refugees commonly sell clothing over Facebook. Goods and services are bought via digital money transfers and either sent by post, transferred from trusted person to trusted person, or picked up in person (e.g. a Ugandan IDP selling jewellery through a church WhatsApp group agrees to give the already bought

jewellery to buyers at church the following Sunday). Selling in these fora offers **a means to circumvent local work restrictions,** such as the barring of informal street hawking in cities such as Kampala, Uganda. At the same time, displaced people are often still **vulnerable to other restrictions, such as refugee IDs not being considered valid ID with which to purchase SIM cards,** and thus can have challenges in accessing informal social media markets. An unpublicised cancellation of phone numbers held by those using refugee IDs in Kenya, for example, left many refugees without recourse to their digital livelihoods. Case study 6 above provides more information on supply and demand barriers, and how informal social networks works to overcome them.

Elements of Success to Achieve Supply-Side Scale #3:

• Direct access between displaced people (as entrepreneurs and potential employees) and markets (customers and employers) to enable efficient work placement and trade (e.g. online work platforms, social media networks)

• 'Negotiation' of networks through secondary market intermediaries (NGOs, development actors) to ensure that identification is accepted, exploitation is avoided, and displaced people are marketing themselves/their skills effectively

• Initial support/subsidies by development or private sector actors to create proofs of concept – such as providing initial payments to displaced people in order to test and prove their ability to competitively complete online tasks, in order to establish displaced people as effective suppliers to market demands (e.g. GSMA offered LevelApp a 300,000 GBP start-up grant, see Case Study 5 for more information).

5.2 Demand-Side Barriers

Alongside the significant supply side barriers presented above, demand side barriers also affect displaced people's access to digital work. Just as the combination of these affects displaced people's digital employment and digital entrepreneurship prospects, it can negatively impact employers and private sector actors who miss out on an important potential workforce. This section reviews three main demand side challenges that present barriers to scaling up future of work opportunities for displaced people.

CASE STUDY 6: LEVELAPP (Uganda)

What is it: The 'LevelApp' from the NGO RefUnite allows users to sign up, download datasets, & complete 'tasks' such as categorising images on their phone to train AI. Users are paid for completed work through mobile money.

The Story: The LevelApp was enabled through a 300,000 GBP grant from GSMA to pay users and create a body of evidence to prove displaced people's capacity to be competitive in the digital market. The founders will use this evidence to secure large-scale private sector contracts to create a sustainable service. Users may soon have the option to have a small fee deducted from their monthly earnings to provide life insurance – very important in high mortality settings like Uganda. Still in the pilot phase, the project is targeting 5,000 users and aims to scale to 25,000 in the next year.

What this Illustrates:
• Availability of mobile and flexible digital work in low-resource contexts can offer digital work at scale
• Potential to 'digitally build', e.g. attach other services such as life insurance
• Sustainable model after start-up grant

Source: Interview, COO, LevelApp

CASE STUDY 7: Social media platforms as informal trading platforms

Actors: Facebook and WhatsApp groups are important online platforms for informal local (as well as regional or international) trading between displaced people, diaspora groups, the wider host community.

Location: Local, Diasporic, Transnational, Global

Overcomes Supply Barriers:
- Capability: Makes use of existing skills through informal entrepreneurship
- Access: Restrictions on the right to work are circumvented
- Networks: Immediate access to potential markets, immediate responses of interest

Overcomes Demand Barriers:
- Knowledge & Trust: De facto vetting occurs as seller is 'member' of social media group (WhatsApp: phone number is known, FB: mutual friends identifiable, etc)
- Access: Groups can be used for seeking services/goods as well as offering them

Takeaway for scaling:
- Digital networks enable direct access between displaced people and potential markets & offer 'pre-made' markets
- Digital job opportunities exist through only a phone number and access to digital money (this opens up opportunities for low-resource displaced people)

Sources: Key informant interviews, Lisa Poggiali, Julie Zollmann; Hatayama (2018)

Demand-Side Barrier to Scale #1: Lack of Knowledge and Trust

People living in conditions of displacement are often considered an 'unknown' or 'un-vetted' population – and are left unconsidered as a potential workforce. The lack of knowledge and trust this illustrates is a key barrier to helping employers hire displaced people.[52] However, research illustrates that employers who don't hire displaced people are in fact missing out. A recent study on refugees hired in the US found that **companies successfully integrating refugees into their work** environment have employees with **higher retention rates,** themselves gain **stronger management skills,** and can d**raw on a broader pool of potential workers,** thereby selecting only the most competitive.[53] As the researchers explain,

'[I]ntegrating refugees into the workforce not only provides financial stability in the lives of people displaced from their countries, it also opens the doors for others to a diversified, accepting and accommodating workforce with good management and the capability to handle other diversity issues that may arise.'[54]

The following solutions present important information about how to overcome the barrier of a lack of knowledge and trust on the demand side in hiring and buying goods and services from displaced people.

Solutions to Demand-Side Barrier #1

'Soft skills' training through Market Intermediaries

Like the discussion on market intermediaries in the supply side above, these actors offer a mediated and thus vetted connection between displaced people and potential employees. While – as discussed below – they can operate in the form of a traditional job recruitment agency, market intermediaries can also undertake some of the soft skill and other skills training that employers need in employees. As the founder of the Gaza Sky Geeks explained, 'The hardest gap to fill is brokering relationships with the private sector because they need to come in and spend a lot of time with the trainees in order to really get to know and trust them.'[55]

Gaza Sky Geeks aims to bridge this gap through technology, such as offering interactive digital training and teaching soft skills via gamification. They expect this can accomplish 60-80% of the teaching needed to gain the trust and confidence of employers needing 'intangible' as well as technical skillsets from displaced people in order to hire them. Other digital forms of training and gaining knowledge and trust exist through 'e-interships' offered by Kepler, which offers an accredited US undergraduate degree from Southern New Hampshire University to refugees in Rwanda. After graduation, students are placed in digital internships with potential employers, who are able to train and get to know them in a low-risk temporary arrangement – with the mutual goal of eventual employment.[56]

NGOs and start-ups focusing on training and education, ranging from the Gaza Sky Geeks to the Sky School overviewed in previous sections, may be the ideal trainers and intermediaries to help displaced people gain the knowledge and trust of potential em-

ployers. They commonly undertake free training and education for displaced people, and so could easily incorporate tailored skills training into existing modules. They are also generally perceived as legitimate actors that have the knowledge and tools to train and de facto vet displaced people.

Credentialing and ID systems

The creation of interoperable credentialing and ID systems outlined in the supply side also has huge benefits for the demand side. Several of the identified credentialing and ID services target private sector employers primarily or alongside individuals.[57] Trulioo, a 'global identity verification service', proclaims, for example, that companies can 'Verify customers online, anywhere, in seconds…knowing your customer mitigates fraud, risk and financial crime.'[58] As mentioned above, its client base has expanded to NGOs such as the Red Cross.

Verif-y, a blockchain-based digital identity platform, serves individuals as well as employers, credential providers, and other organizations. Claiming to 'modernize the relationship between employers and job applicants', the website states, 'For the first time both parties have a platform where they can com-

---

ID Gaps – Recommendations

Many credentialing and ID systems exist but they are not aggregated across sectors or countries, meaning that the market doesn't have a means to verify people or their skillsets across borders and firms.

How could actors mobilise to resolve issues stemming from a lack of standardization and inter-operability?

municate directly regarding verified credentials. This cuts out the middlemen in the process and saves both the employer and job-seeker time and money. In contrast to background screening companies, Verif-y's platform provides a more reliable, less expensive, real-time verification process by replacing current legacy methods with a direct and more accurate data-driven model.'[59]

These examples demonstrate the potential, if globally scaled and made accessible to displaced people, for the quick verification and credentialing of displaced people as potential employees to occur. Were private sector actors able to have easily available verified information about displaced people, employing displaced people would likely become much more appealing as well as a feasible,[60] thereby benefitting both the supply and demand side.

Elements of Success to Achieve Demand-Side Scale #1:
• Emphasis on building interoperable (e.g. transnational rather than national) and standardized ID and credentialing systems

• ID and credentialing systems that are available through phone apps and appropriate in remote areas to foster widespread uptake

• Create & publicize clear procedures for users to report errors or security breaches (especially critical to protect displaced people's security)

Barrier to Scale #2: Lack of Access
As several sections of this report have detailed, market actors struggle to identify displaced people and migrants with the requisite skills and talent for their sector, in part because only small-scale job-matching platforms exist as well as due to a lack of large-scale partnerships with humanitarian/development actors knowledgeable of displaced and migrant populations. While humanitarian and development actors are well-placed to work with displaced people direct-

---

The Identity Lifecycle

There are three fundamental stages of creating and using a digital identity:

1) Registration, including enrolment and validation,
2) Issuance of documents or credentials,
3) Authentication for service delivery or transactions.

Governments and private firms generally fulfil the roles of identity, attribute, authentication, and service providers. Humanitarian & development actors can also use their legitimacy & access to displaced populations to become involved as identity, authentication/attribute providers. This can increase their legitimacy and open up partnerships with private sector actors who are using credentialing and ID systems to vet potential employees.

Source: GSMA (n.d.)

---

ly to identify and develop skills and talents through trainings and education, they are traditionally less skilled at acting as job recruitment agencies. However, several initiatives have created or are developing models that offer important elements for scaling and wider uptake.

Solutions to Demand-Side Barrier #2
Market intermediaries helping the private sector identify talent in displaced populations
Many of the market intermediaries discussed in this report are traditional humanitarian or development agencies, or broader online work platforms that have begun to engage refugees. However, this research

identified several start-ups, non-profits, and social enterprises explicitly focused on helping the private sector identify talent through job-matching platforms focused on displaced people. Many of these are domestically focused, such as Australia's Refugee Talent or Germany's Workeer. Other platforms such as Accenture's Refugee Talent Hub seek to increase private sector access to potential refugee employees through organizing Meet & Greet sessions, trial internships, and other contact opportunities.

As the world's only international job-matching platform for refugees, Talent Beyond Boundaries is a notable exception. Their mandate is simple: 'Skilled refugees need jobs. Global employers need talent. We connect them.' Potential employers can hire Talent Beyond Boundaries to identify and recruit refugees, as well as verify and validate skills. The organisation has created a 'Talent Catalogue' of over 10,000 skilled refugees and identifies strong candidates for corporate partners. Uniquely, refugee employees gain temporary skilled worker visas rather than enter countries as refugees (although they retain refugee status), thereby promoting labour mobility as the so-called 'fourth durable solution for refugees'.[61] While the process has been slow – only 6 job candidates have arrived in Canada and Australia – the model demonstrates

SHORT CASE STUDY

Talent Beyond Boundaries aims to provide a full remote recruitment service to employers seeking to hire refugees

'By hiring through Talent Beyond Boundaries your organisation can gain a skilled and talented employee whilst also contributing to solving the global refugee crisis. We provide a full remote recruitment service including identifying suitable refugee candidates and assisting employers to conduct video interviews and skills validation. We also assist with the immigration and onboarding process.' (TBB 2019)

the potential for the remote recruitment of displaced people as well as the work of unlikely actors such as a non-profit organisation in forging impressive partnerships with governments, private sector actors, and members of the humanitarian and development community including the World Bank and UNHCR to facilitate job-matching.

Elements of Success to Achieve Demand-Side Scale #2:
- Developing large-scale aggregated job-matching platforms to enable the private sector to access a talent pool of displaced people

- Direct partnership with, or modelling of, job recruitment agencies

- Networking across existing initiatives to identify skilled displaced people for digital employment

Barrier to Scale #3: Lack of Interest
While the case study of Talent Beyond Boundaries offers important points for scaling, an enduring question is whether humanitarian impulses outweigh bottom lines. Indeed, outside of Corporate Responsibil-

Access Gaps – Recommendations

Hundreds of actors and initiatives exist around the world to support the access of displaced people and migrants to market demands. However, these are generally small-scale and fragmented.

How can actors work to scale and network these initiatives to make it easier for the market to utilise them as intermediaries?

ity missions, many market actors are looking for the most competitive skills rather than humanitarian 'cases', meaning that they are unlikely to specifically seek out displaced people and migrants as workers.[62] For some, this puts the viability of fostering digital livelihoods for displaced people in question due to a tricky combination of the need for scale, sustainability, and cost-effectiveness.[63] Integral to addressing all of these factors, however, is establishing the interest of demand-side actors to engage in hiring displaced people at all. In instances this may occur through the promotion of displaced people not as displaced people but as competitive actors in a market, and thus occur through leaving the refugee label behind. However, this research has also identified several means to address this current gap by examining various types of existing practice focused on elevating displaced peoples' status in the private sector and in markets.

SHORT CASE STUDY

Tent Partnership for Refugees

'Tent works closely with businesses to help them identify and understand opportunities to help refugees. When companies are ready to take concrete actions, Tent works closely with them to develop and implement tangible commitments to support refugees. We believe that companies have the greatest impact when they treat refugees not as victims, but as economically-productive workers, suppliers, entrepreneurs, and customers...' (Tent 2019)

What this illustrates:
- Membership model for high-level private sector engagement
- Coalition as guiding resource
- Advocacy for changing perceptions of displaced people

Involvement of private sector coalitions
Several private sector initiatives are seeking to promote digital and other employment of displaced people through business coalitions. Two of the largest are Tent, led by Chobani yoghurt founder Hamdi Ulukaya, and the Business Action Refugee Network (BRAN), led by the International Rescue Committee (IRC).

Through its Partnership for Refugees, Tent has a coalition of more than 100 companies supporting refugees around the world, including Starbucks, Uber, Shell, and Twitter. Tent Partnership is a platform for companies to share info and best practices, increase private sector coordination, and 'forge innovative solutions to deliver greater impact'. In addition to garnering interest for hiring refugees, Tent strives to help companies integrate refugees into supply chain, invest in refugee start-ups, and deliver effective services to them.[64]

BRAN brings together European businesses interested in addressing displacement. These businesses share business models and successful partnerships in order to create more refugee-friendly business environments and a more positive public discourse surrounding refugee integration and inclusion. Involved members of the network include Virgin, Ben & Jerry's and The B Team.[65]

These coalitions constitute an important membership model demonstrating high-level private sector engagement. Acting as a guiding resource, Tent and BRAN promote concrete action (such as refugee employment) but also play a larger advocacy role by shifting the perception of refugees from victims to capable workers in the eyes of companies.

Creation of competitive goods, services, and platforms
The involvement of displaced people in digital and digitally mediated (as well as other) work can only occur at a large scale if they are able to offer competitive goods or services. However, in order to do this, they

must be able to access customers in the first place. One way this commonly occurs is through e-commerce platforms. EkShop Shoron in Bangladesh, overviewed in the side box, demonstrates a process of building scale into models creating pathways to competitive trading and selling. Seeking to overcome challenges in international global selling that other refugee-specific platforms struggle with (quality control is an enduring issue), it aims to link to international e-commerce platforms and offer competitive goods made by refugees at the going market price.

Narrative change around displaced people and migrants

As discussed above, some business coalitions are actively working to change the narrative around displaced people and migrants. While this work has received widespread media attention because of the high-profile actors involved, less known are the coalitions comprised of refugees and migrants themselves working to address the same issue. Some of these are nationally-focused, such as the Refugee-Led Organisation Network based in Kampala, Uganda, which aims to coordinate the activities of refugee-led community organisations, undertake advocacy through member organisations acting as a united front, and partner with other refugee-led organisations. Others are transnational, such as the Global Refugee-Led Network and Network for Refugee Voices. The Global Refugee-Led Network aims for refugees to be involved in meaningful decision-making at every level of refugee policy, and their advocacy efforts led to the important inclusion of civil society organisations led by refugees in the Refugee Compact.[67] This demonstrates the power of collective organising and displaced people's own role in changing the rhetoric surrounding them.

Elements of Success to Achieve Demand-Side Scale #3:

• Engaging the private sector to involve and promote the existence of a skilled workforce of displaced people (e.g. fostering interest 'from the inside')

CASE STUDY 8: EKSHOP SHORON (Bangladesh) E-Commerce Pathway

What is it: ekShop Shoron (meaning both 'remembrance' and 'displacement' in Bengali) is a nascent e-commerce model for displaced populations, specifically Rohingya, led by Access to Information (A2i), a programme of the Government of Bangladesh.

The Story: ekShop Shoron is based on an existing e-commerce model developed in Bangladesh for rural sellers targeting urban customers. The magnitude of the Rohingya crisis – where refugees outnumber hosts 3-1 in some areas – and the significant restrictions on rights and livelihoods for refugees in Bangladesh necessitate creative approaches to opening livelihoods. Still in phase one, ekShop Shoron is building a pathway to access international e-commerce markets, as Rohingya refugees are not allowed to sell in Bangladesh. It is currently training Rohingya women to develop a fashion line to be marketed internationally. The Bangladeshi host community is included in the pilot for the finishing & packaging of products, thereby easing tension over jobs 'lost' to refugees.

What this Illustrates:
• Scaling can be built into models promoting digital livelihoods from the beginning
• Existing models can provide important starting points for adaptation to suit the needs and contexts of displaced populations

Source: Case Study Presentation, Migrant Nationa Geneva Workshop, Anir Chowdhury, Policy Advisor, a2i

- Membership models to mobilise support and action (e.g. business coalitions, refugee-led networks)

- Building scale into digital work pathways from a project's inception in order to meet the needs and interests of the demand-side market

- Creating transnational coalitions of advocacy actors addressing perceptions and depictions of displaced people and migrants (targeting different key audiences such as the private sector, governments, citizens, etc)
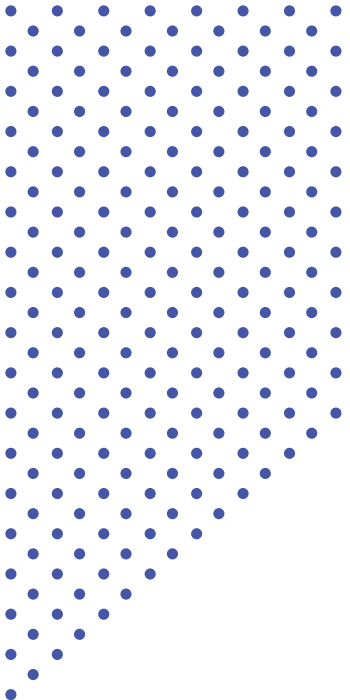
6. Moving Forward: How Can We Think at Scale?

As this report has shown, the changing world of work poses unique benefits as well as challenges to refugees, displaced people, and other migrants in similar situations. Depending on forced migrants' capabilities and access to resources, digitalisation opens huge opportunities to access new markets through online work as well as access to local, regional, and international markets through digital platforms linking services to customers. Key advantages for displaced people include the ability to access work despite living in host countries with high unemployment or restrictions on work, and the mobility of digital work itself, meaning it can be done 'on the move'. However, significant challenges and barriers remain due to both the unique situation of displacement as well as characteristics not singular to it, namely the low socioeconomic status and geographic location of many displaced people.

6.1 What The Case Studies Tell Us

When overviewing the landscape of current formal and informal initiatives and pathways to find or foster digital work for displaced people, several insights emerge. First, the trends in the type of assistance provided to displaced people to foster digital livelihoods largely mirror key features of the changing nature of work, namely the need for upskilling, online work platforms and the online gig economy as the workplaces of the future, and even the types of digital work in which displaced people are engaged, including coding, web design, and translation.[68] This

suggests that existing initiatives have the 'right' focus and that digital economies do indeed hold potential to engage displaced people in the future world of work.

However, it is vital to note that the vast majority of displaced people are not part of this digital trend. A much riskier and exploitative informal economy continues to be a daily reality for many.[69] While some initiatives target the vulnerable and lower classes, some of the platforms and initiatives identified here clearly cater to a 'middle class' of displaced people holding prior skills or the social and other capital to access education or undertake work.

Second, this research found that both small organisations such as the Gaza Sky Geeks and unexpected actors such as the World Food Programme are effectively engaging in this space. Despite not yet being actualised at scale, their large visions appear to hold many of the building blocks for success. The different types and variety of actors engaged in fostering digital livelihoods for displaced people points towards the type of process undertaken being a key element of success, and that being the highest-resourced or best-placed actor is not necessary to effectively implement initiatives.

Additionally, some of the most innovative work being done to foster digital livelihoods occurs through legal loopholes and in legal grey spaces, ranging from refugees starting businesses in the EU through

e-Estonia to opening American bank accounts while based in Gaza with the help of Gaza Sky Geeks. This points towards a) the importance of advocating for legal rights and in particular labour rights for displaced people, b) the work that can be achieved in even the most constrained of environments (e.g. EkShop Shoron, Bangladesh), and c) the possibility for regulatory sandboxes and proofs of concept/evidence generated to play a key role in opening up more legal space for displaced people's widespread entry into digital and digitally mediated livelihoods.

While myriad opportunities exist for displaced people and migrants to enter the digital workforce, this research also identified significant supply and demand barriers: a lack of **capability, access, and networks** on the supply side, and a lack of **knowledge and trust, access,** and interest on the demand side. These are related to **systemic barriers** including work regulations and existing narratives of displaced people and migrants as victims and criminals rather than capable people with competitive talents and skills. Each of these factors affects the ability to **scale solutions.**

At the same time, existing practice actively addresses these barriers, including NGOs and start-ups acting as digital work intermediaries for vetting and job-matching, and the rise of **digital identity, credentialing, and verification services.** These findings raise questions for the Migrant Nation and other actors in this space in terms of key actors, motivations, and strategies (see box).

The case studies illustrated here demonstrate that there are actors and initiatives operating at many levels with varying degrees of scale and scope. Institutionally at the international level, initiatives like ITC/NRC's RESI, the Gaza Sky Geeks, RefUnite's LevelApp, and Talent Beyond Boundaries offer 'A-Z' programmes that provide hard and soft skills training, as well as direct linkages to jobs via online work platforms and segments of work from pre-agreed contracts.

Questions Raised

- How can elements of scale be harnessed to build a demand-side market?

- Which actors are best placed to act as market intermediaries between displaced people & digital work?

- What is the motivation for market actors to engage with displaced people & digital livelihoods?

However, due to the time and resource intensive nature of training participants, seeking out contracts, and developing private sector relationships, these organisations are unable to offer large-scale programmes that help displaced people find digital work in large numbers. This suggests the value of a networking architecture that might help these initiatives more easily engage with interested private sector actors and become known to investors or collaborators, and thus reduce some of the time and resources that they currently individually expend.

At the national level, NGOs and social enterprises tend to have a blend of a humanitarian and business/development focus. Many of the initiatives identified were domestic job-matching platforms such as Germany's Workeer or the Netherland's Refugee Start Force, which offer both refugees and potential employers the opportunity to identify each other. Many other organisations offer basic digital skills training such as the Developer's Institute in Tel Aviv, which has paired up with the NGO African Refugee Development Center to train refugees in coding to both provide skills to these potential employees and address the country's severe shortage of software engineers and developers.

However, many of the national training initiatives lack direct follow-up links to work as well as ties to the international economy. Therefore, while this level constitutes an important step to digital livelihoods for displaced people, the various initiatives often work in silos. There is a lack of linkages between, for example, skilling initiatives and job-matching platforms, as well as other follow-ups to markets and employment. This suggests that as it stands initiatives operating individually at the national level cannot offer displaced people work en masse or help them create it. It is also unclear how sustainable these initiatives are, as many initially identified did not appear to still be active.

Meanwhile, at the local level in cities or refugee camps, grassroots NGOs and community-based organisations offer basic skills training as well as some placement in digital work – but mainly connected to the local market. The Somali organisation Shaqodoon for example houses the Hargabits Academy, which offers ICT and digital skills training to Somali IDPs in Hargeisa. The organisation has had such success in placing IDPs in the local market that the RESI programme highlighted above has recently formed a partnership to begin working through Hargabits. However, connections like this are outliers as many small organisations are restricted through lack of funds and contacts to basic skills training without more involved follow-up.

The case of Hargabits demonstrates, however, how local actors are an important part of the architecture to foster digital livelihoods for displaced people: they are knowledgeable of local economic demands and are able to make use of local networks to identify job opportunities for their graduates. However, local initiatives often lack networks to national and international level and thus miss out on important opportunities to connect to markets and scale.

The overall focus of both formal and informal initiatives and pathways at the international, national, and local level demonstrate a focus on the training or em-

ployment of individual displaced people –often considered to be potential entrepreneurs – rather than an emphasis on large-scale job placements and contracts for displaced people. Even the few institutional initiatives highlighted in this report that operate internationally and secure large-scale private sector contracts do not currently have programmes in place to cater to large numbers of displaced people. Reasons for this include the time and resource intensiveness of these programmes as well as both the supply and demand barriers presented in the report.

6.2 Implications & Conclusions

Drawing on both the unexpected successes as well as the challenges identified in this research, three key areas emerge to unlock new digital possibilities for displaced people and migrants at scale, namely the **aggregation** of actors, the **standardization** of key structural pillars such as credentials and ID recognition, **and advocacy.** Addressing these areas offers the potential to bring some of the identified solutions to scale. At the same time, it is important to note that aggregating actors and advocating for change also risks having negative consequences for actors and initiatives which were not previously perceived as 'political', while standardization carries personal data security risks. Thus, each of these areas necessitate contextual reflection and careful action.

As discussed in the previous section, one of the largest barriers to scale identified in this research is the fragmented practice of existing initiatives seeking to create opportunities for displaced people to access digital and digitally mediated work. While the scope of these initiatives varies from skills training and education to direct pathways to work, very few are connected to either similar initiatives or the multiple other actors (such as credentialing services or mobile banking providers) that a scaled pathway to digital work necessitates.

This fragmentation demonstrates a need to **aggregate** the hundreds of initiatives and actors in place

to help match displaced people with employers and jobs to better match supply and demand. It appears to be very fruitful, for example, to link actors in different areas together to help address barriers that keep displaced people from accessing work (e.g. linking NGOs that offer skills training to digital ID and credentialing services that are able to validate their capabilities). It also appears to be beneficial to link like-minded initiatives that are conducting similar work to share best practices and cross-fertilize.

A crucial aspect of this aggregation would be the **ongoing role of intermediaries (NGO, private sector, and others) to facilitate market supply and demand.** The networking of these initiatives to either like-minded organisations or important private sector and other actors offers an important foundation for scaling. Best practices and proofs of concept could be shared, and potential investors and partners would have a verified pool of actors to work with.

Were this aggregation to take place formally, potentially through an avenue such as a recognised membership, there is also an opportunity for these actors to gain a broader legitimacy they could extend to their participants, which could also address some of the identified barriers of lack of demand-side knowledge and trust. This could ultimately **offer systemic market and facilitation support** to strengthen existing pathways to digital work. This aggregation might take place through existing coalitions or networks, or job-matching, online work, or e-commerce platforms eager to take on a new role.

Market facilitation is especially important because this research has identified a skills and resource threshold for basic competition in the digital marketplace. Refugees and migrants with a disproportionate need for digital livelihoods (e.g. the poorest and most 'vulnerable') are often those with disproportionate barriers to accessing them (including a lack of identity documents, language skills, access to stable internet, and encampment in under-resourced environments) – and thus those with the lowest likelihood of success. This replicates many findings from development projects, such as (non-digital) micro-finance for refugees, which have found that micro-finance programmes are most successful when they target those already holding some assets (e.g. financial literacy, education, etc). This raises the challenging question for assistance actors of which populations to target to foster digital livelihoods, as well as how to ensure that rights such as decent work are upheld.

Yet there also appear to be barriers that widely affect displaced people regardless of individual capability. The lack of recognition of IDs, or missing documentation altogether, came up again and again as a key barrier to accessing digital (and often other forms of) work from both displaced people themselves and initiatives seeking to support them. A lack of means to validate existing capabilities also arose as an issue.

Many displaced people are unable to work digitally because, in addition to lacking financial inclusion, their IDs are not recognised by online work platforms, they cannot legally buy a SIM card with their existing ID, or they lack the means to prove their abilities to employers. **There is therefore a crucial need to continue the work that UNHCR and other organisations have championed** in lobbying host governments for the acceptance of refugee IDs and the provision of national documents. However, the problem extends further in terms of the challenge of validating credentials and in cases where displaced people are on the move or change host countries – and thereby often experience the same issue of unrecognised documentation. A more systemic approach is needed.

Standardizing credentialing and ID systems offers an opportunity for displaced people to maintain acceptance of their documents regardless of the country they are in. The creation of interoperable digital credentialing and ID systems would allow displaced people to carry their identity and recognised skillsets

with them during flight. Notably, **it is important for these systems to be accessible through mobile phone** and be available in remote, 'last mile connectivity' areas in order to ensure widespread accessibility. While this research has identified several innovative private sector actors working in this area, universal legal identity is also a cross-cutting theme of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.**70** Thus, there is space for humanitarian and development actors to work alongside tech start-ups and governments to further actualise this work.

At the same time, **context is critical** – many landscapes, not just one, need to be considered when examining the possibilities that the future of work presents to displaced people. At the most basic, different contexts have varying levels of both physical and digital infrastructure that impact displaced people's ability to access digital work. To this end, while it seems that several 'one size fits all' interventions such as digital IDs may be part of a solution, it is imperative to further explore the many contextualised means to foster digital and digitally mediated livelihoods for displaced people, ranging for example from possible proofs of concept arising from legal grey spaces in Bangladesh to a widespread embracing of digital livelihoods within the informal sector in Turkey. One informant used the analogy of human rights as an example, sharing, 'It is criticized for "one size fits all" problems, but has also allowed local struggles to relate their struggles to global norms. Maybe the *Migrant Union* may function in a similar way: a set of global norms and regulations that builds on the refugee compact, [becoming] the fair-trade label of digital economies.'71

Advocacy is needed to address gaps in regulations and restrictions, promote the use of legal alternative pathways (e.g. regulatory sandboxes) to help displaced people access digital livelihoods, and open up the right to work in more countries. Currently the promotion of digital and digitally mediated work occurs by a variety of actors, including the private sector themselves through business coalitions and displaced people through transnational networks. This research found that this work can be increased to further negotiate supply side enterprise and trade through negotiating access to platforms, as well as support the demand side through negotiating access to displaced people's right to work digitally.

Advocacy efforts could be strengthened through evidence generated by the piloting of regulatory sandboxes and other proofs of concept demonstrating the rewards that digital work by displaced people can offer. To this end, the Global Compact on Refugees and Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, respectively, may present opportunities for governments, donors, and other actors to engage in innovative and exploratory interventions. This could fall under the Refugee Compact's key objective of enhancing refugee self-reliance, for example, and could take the form of pledges for the upcoming Global Refugee Forum. The Global Compact on Migration's objectives to ensure that all migrants have proof of legal identity and adequate documentation (Objective 4), financial inclusion (Objective 20), and crucially to facilitate the fair and ethical recruitment and safeguard conditions that ensure decent work (Objective 6) could act as leading guidelines for strategic action.

6.3 Final Word

In the face of the changing world of work and unprecedented levels of displacement, addressing the barriers and building on existing opportunities are necessary to scale access to displaced people in the future world of work. This research has found that much of the existing work in this space is valuable and successful. However, it is also small-scale and emergent, demonstrating a need for a more cohesive ecosystem for collaboration and sharing. It was also often unclear how involved displaced people were in the process of inception and the design of formal initiatives, which poses the question of which type of digital work and involvement in future areas of work displaced people themselves want to engage in.

These and other questions remain points for further exploration.

At the same time, successes were identified. Capitalising on market intermediaries, aggregating both similar and different actors at various levels, and creating case studies and proofs of concept all demonstrate promising elements for scaling. Focusing on these components presents an exciting pathway forward to actualising the potential of digital livelihoods for displaced people today and in the future.

7. Endnotes

[1] UNHCR (2019) Figures at a Glance, Webpage. https://www.unhcr.org/uk/figures-at-a-glance.html.

[2] IOM (2019) Migration and Climate Change. Webpage. https://www.iom.int/migration-and-climate-change-0.

[3] As an exception, see Andreas Hackl's UK Research and Innovation funded research project 'Digital livelihoods? The online gig economy and the future of decent refugee work in cities', still in a nascent phase in 2019. https://gtr.ukri.org/projects?ref=ES%2FS005757%2F1

[4] See for example reports from the ILO's Future of Work Centenary initiative on technology and jobs, the World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs Report, and the Oxford Internet Institute's iLabour project, particularly their online labour index.

[5] McKinsey (2017) Jobs Lost, Jobs Gained: What the future of work will mean for jobs, skills, and wages. Report, November. https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/future-of-work/jobs-lost-jobs-gained-what-the-future-of-work-will-mean-for-jobs-skills-and-wages

[6] This is crucial to answer due to the growing and projected number of displaced people, current lengths of displacement, multitude of work restrictions on many displaced people in their host country – and the corresponding need for sustainable long-term solutions involving the future world of work.

[7] Learn more about the Global Compact for refugees here: https://www.unhcr.org/uk/the-global-compact-on-refugees.html, and the Sustainable Development Goals here: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300

[8] Copley, C. (2016) Refugees bring entrepreneurial spirit to risk-shy Germany. Reuters, February.

[9] Note: This was described as a refugee camp but accommodation for refugees and asylum seekers in the Netherlands are often considered reception centres, not camps.

[10] SWB. (n.d.) How 10 Years in a Dutch Refugee Camp Prepared Sina Azizi for Trading Cryptocurrency. Start-ups Without Borders (SWB), Online.

[11] The Migrant Union is focused on exploring new avenues for scaling up new livelihoods opportunities for displaced people. It is funded by the Open Society Foundation and was catalyzed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

[12] This includes formal initiatives as well as informal avenues pursued by individuals to find digital work. Primary data on both employees leading formal initiatives as well as displaced people seeking out individual pathways was collected.

[13] For an overview of some of the trainings offered to refugees in Europe, for example, see the betterplace/ Nesta (2018) report on Mapping Digital Social Innovation: Migration and Innovation, https://www.nesta.org.uk/ feature/mapping-digital-social-innovation/mapping-dsi-migration-and-integration/.

[14] As the scoping study was not exhaustive and was based in part on snowballing research, these regions are not definitive areas where the highest activity is occurring. One key limitation of the research was the fact that the scoping was conducted in English. While findings available in German and Spanish were captured due to the main researcher's language skills, the actual search terms and scoping methods were conducted in English.

[15] betterplace/Nesta (2018) Mapping Digital Social Innovation: Migration and Innovation, European Commission. https://www.nesta.org.uk/feature/mapping-digital-social-innovation/mapping-dsi-migration-and-integration/

[16] World Economic Forum (2018) Future of Jobs Survey. Geneva: WEF. http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_ Future_of_Jobs_2018.pdf.

[17] Corporaal, G. (2019) Intermediaries should be worried about the platform economy. The iLabour Project, Oxford Internet Institute. https://ilabour.oii.ox.ac.uk/intermediaries-should-be-worried-about-the-platform-economy/

[18] Lehdonvirta, V., Barnard, H., Graham, M., and Hjorth, I. (2014) Online labour markets – levelling the playing field for international service markets? Paper presented at the IPP2014: Crowdsourcing for Politics and Policy conference, University of Oxford, 25-26 September 2014.

[19] Corporaal, G.F., & Lehdonvirta, V. (2017). Platform Sourcing: How Fortune 500 Firms are Adopting Online Freelancing Platforms. Oxford Internet Institute: Oxford. https://www.oii.ox.ac.uk/blog/how-the-worlds-largest-companies-use-online-freelancing-platforms-new-report/

[20] ITC (2018) RESI: The Refugee Employment and Skills Initiative (Brochure), Geneva: ITC.

[21] Key Informant interview, Katie Schlinder, Director, RESI Programme, International Trade Center.

[22] Accenture (2018) It's Learning. Just Not as We Know It. https://www.slideshare.net/accenture/its-learning-just-not-as-we-know-it

[23] Accenture (2017) New Skills Now: Inclusion in the digital economy. https://www.accenture.com/_acnmedia/ pdf-63/accenture-new-skills-now-inclusion-in-the-digital.pdf.

[24] ILO (2019) Decent Work, webpage. Geneva: ILO. https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/decent-work/lang--en/ index.htm.

[25] https://www.gsma.com/mobilefordevelopment/mobile-for-humanitarian-innovation/innovation-fund/

[26] GSMA (2017) Mobile is a Lifeline: Research from Nyarugusu Refugee Camp, Tanzania. https://www.gsma. com/mobilefordevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/TWP98_1-Refugee-Report_WebSpreads_R1.pdf.

[27] Key informant interview, Norwegian Refugee Council country director, Kenya.

[28] Key informant interview, Khadra Ali & Ahmed Ali, Team Leads, Hargabits Academy.

[29] Key informant interview, Julie Zollmann, Researcher, The Fletcher School, Tufts University. Learn more about Julie Zollman's in-progress research on this: www.juliezollmann.com.

[30] The Bondeko Refugee Livelihoods Centre is one example of a refugee-led organisation based in Kampala, Uganda, that has teamed up with the NGO Xavier Project to offer a 'tech hub' on its auspices. Refugee teachers train fellow refugees in ICT on computers donated by Xavier Project, and internet is accessible for a small fee to the local community. See: www.bondekocenter.com. Source: Key Informant Interview, Paul Kithimba, Bondeko Centre Director.

[31] Key informant interviews: Julie Zollmann, Researcher, The Fletcher School, Tufts University; Khadra Ali & Ahmed Ali, Team Leads, Hargabits Academy.; Katie Schlinder, Director, RESI Programme, International Trade Center.

[32] Key informant interview, Andreas Hackl, Senior Research Fellow, University of Edinburgh; Key informant interview, Julie Zollman, Researcher, The Fletcher School, Tufts University.

[33] Accenture (2018) It's Learning. Just Not as We Know It.

[34] ITC (2018) The Refugee Employment and Skills Initiative. Geneva: ITC. P. 13.

[35] Comment, Migrant Union Workshop, Geneva, July 2, 2019; Mia Eskelund Peerson, Co-founder & Co-Executive Director, Sky School; Sky School (2019) About, Webpage. https://www.skyschool.world/our-education; Comment and informal discussion, Migrant Union Workshop, Geneva, July 1, 2019; Stuart MacAlpine, Director of Education, United World Colleges South East Asia/Sky School.

[36] Comment and informal discussion, Migrant Union Workshop, Geneva, July 1, 2019; Stuart MacAlpine, Director of Education, United World Colleges South East Asia/Sky School.

[37] Zetter, R., & Ruaudel, H. (2016). Refugees' right to work and access to labor markets – An assessment. World Bank Global Program on Forced Displacement (GPFD)/Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development (KNOMAD) Thematic Working Group on Forced Migration. KNOMAD Working Paper. Washington, DC: World Bank Group.

[38] Key informant interview, Refugee (preferred to remain anonymous), Nairobi, Kenya.

[39] See: www.learningmachine.com

[40] World Bank

[41] Reicke, Jeffrey, 'Refugees and Humanitarian Assistance: Which Kind of Aid Is Best?', Center for Financial Inclusion, 14 February, 2017.

[42] See Banqu, https://banqu.co.

[43] ibid.

[44] Korkmaz, E. (n.d.) Blockchain for refugees: great hopes, deep concerns. Oxford Department of International Development, University of Oxford. https://www.qeh.ox.ac.uk/content/blockchain-refugees-great-hopes-deep-concerns

[45] Horst, C. (2006). Introduction: refugee livelihoods: continuity and transformations. Refugee Survey Quarterly, 25(2), 6-22.

[46] Key informant interview, Julie Zollmann, Researcher, The Fletcher School, Tufts University.

[47] Fayyez, S. (2018) A review on measuring digital trade & e-commerce as new economic statistics products. Paper prepared for the 16th Conference of IAOS OECD Headquarters, Paris, France, 19-21 September. http://www.oecd.org/iaos2018/programme/IAOS-OECD2018_Item_3-D-1-Fayyaz.pdf.

[48] Key informant interview, Julie Zollmann, Researcher, The Fletcher School, Tufts.

[49] Key informant interview, Lisa Poggiali, Price Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow, University of Pennsylvania.

[50] Easton-Calabria, E. (2016) 'Refugees learned to fish for themselves'. UNHCR Working Paper Series.

[51] Key informant interview, Lisa Poggiali, Price Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow, University of Pennsylvania.

[52] Key informant interview, Ori Artman, Microsoft General Manager (Seattle & Berlin)

[53] Kallick, D. & Roldan, C. (2018) Refugees as Employees: Good Retention, Strong Recruitment. TENT/Fiscal Policy Institute. http://fiscalpolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Refugees-as-employees.pdf.

[54] Roldan, C. & Kallick, D. (2018) Why Hiring Refugees is Good for Business. RefugeesDeeply. https://www.newsdeeply.com/refugees/community/2018/06/19/why-hiring-refugees-is-good-for-business.

[55] Comment, Ryan Sturgill, Gaza Sky Geeks, Migrant Union Convening, Geneva, 1 July, 2019.

[56] Written comment, Nina Weaver, Director of Partnerships and Research, Kepler. For more information about the organisation, see: www.kepler.org.

[57] Governments are also becoming increasingly involved in digital identity systems such as biometrics, which are used for everything from reducing teacher absenteeism in India to reducing tax evasion in Argentina. See https://www.gsma.com/mobilefordevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Towards-Shared-Principles-for-Public-and-Private-Sector-Cooperation.pdf

[58] See: www.trulioo.com

[59] Verif-y (2019) Credential and Identity Verification, Webpage. https://verif-y.com/identity-and-credential-verification/

[60] Key informant interview, Ori Artman, Microsoft General Manager (Seattle & Berlin)

[61] Long, K. (2015) From Refugee to Migrant? Labour mobility's protection potential. Migration Policy Institute.

[62] Key informant interview, Ori Artman, Microsoft General Manager (Seattle & Berlin); Key informant interview, UNHCR Economic Inclusion Officer.

[63] Key informant interview, UNHCR Economic Inclusion Officer.

[64] Tent (2019) Our Work, webpage. https://www.tent.org/our-work/.

[65] IRC (n.d.) Introduction to BRAN. New York: International Rescue Committee.

[66] Key Informant Interview, Katie Schlinder, Director, RESI programme, International Trade Centre.

[67] Refugee Compact, Final Draft. Para 40. https://www.unhcr.org/5b3295167.pdf.

[68] Lehdonvirta, V. (2017) How the World's Largest Companies Use Online Freelancing Platforms, Report, Oxford Internet Institute, Oxford. https://www.oii.ox.ac.uk/blog/how-the-worlds-largest-companies-use-online-freelancing-platforms-new-report/

[69] ILO (2016) The Access of Refugees and Other Forcibly Displaced Persons to the Labour Market. Geneva: ILO. https://www.refworld.org/pdfid/58bd53f14.pdf.

[70] OSF (2015) Legal Identity in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda: Lessons from Kibera, Kenya. Policy Paper, Open Society Justice Initiative. https://www.justiceinitiative.org/uploads/0a6472de-a975-4a3b-b3ad-2b979891d645/legal-identity-2030-agenda-lessons-kibera-kenya-2051216.pdf

[71] Written comment, Andreas Hackl, Senior Research Fellow, University of Edinburgh.

Further References From Outtake Boxes:

Arksey, H., & O'Malley, L. (2005). Scoping studies: towards a methodological framework. International journal of social research methodology, 8(1), 19-32.

GSMA (n.d.) GSMA Identity Innovation Lab: Account Lifecycle Best Practices. https://www.gsma.com/identity/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/MWCS18-Account-Lifecycle-Best-Practices-Atreedev-Banerjee-Danal.pdf.
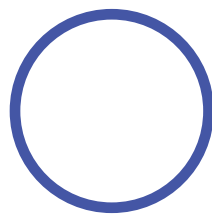
Hatayama, M. (2018). ICTs and livelihood supports of refugees and IDPs. https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/14261.

Mays, N., Roberts, E. and Popay, J. (2001) Synthesising research evidence. In N. Fulop, P. Allen, A. Clarke and N. Black (eds) Studying the Organisation and Delivery of Health Services: Research Methods (London: Routledge), pp. 188-220.

TBB (2019) Hire Refugees: Find Top Talent and Make a Global Difference, webpage. https://talentbeyondboundaries.org/for-employers.html.

Tent (2019) Tent Partnership for Refugees, webpage. https://www.tent.org/.

WEF (2019) Creating a workforce for the machine age. Geneva: WEF. http://reports.weforum.org/digital-transformation/creating-a-workforce-for-the-machine-age/.